

able progress which is to the credit of American medicine during the last three decades.

But creditable as that record of achievement in organization may be, it is far, far from what it could or should be. All about us, on every hand, are organizations, seemingly without end, which seem to have a more substantial substratum in material resources than that possessed by organized medicine. Yet none of these organizations have so large a proportion of members who do so much service for unfortunate fellow citizens, often without monetary or other reward, as that of the profession of medicine. It is conceded by all honest thinking members of the laity who have studied these matters that the medical profession is entitled to more recognition for its altruistic principles and work than it actually receives. Yet the fact remains that the ancient profession of the healing art could learn much concerning effective organization from a host of groups and societies that seem to have been born but yesterday.

Wherein then, do we fail? Is it because we do not sufficiently dissociate ourselves from our daily individualistic lives? Do we not, through such non-association, prevent the realization of achievement results which would be ours were we only to contact with one another and work shoulder to shoulder with one another, as could rightly be expected of colleagues in a noble profession to which each has pledged his faith and homage?

It has been the fashion of some members of our profession to decry medical organizations and medical society work. Yet these same colleagues are often usually more than willing to accept any and all official honors which such medical organizations can bestow upon them. Sometimes one is almost tempted to think that some of these non-coöperative, non-group spirit colleagues, who give practically nothing to the medical organizations which protect the interests of all of us, indulge in their criticisms, largely because in their selfishness, they have inwardly taken umbrage at such official nonrecognition, or because they look with envious eyes on official recognition of colleagues to whom such honors have come as a reward for altruistic service. To cover up their personal non-coöperation, they pose as being above medical societies and indifferent to the work of such organizations. Such colleagues should remember that even though they themselves are unwilling to coöperate in group efforts, it is not necessary to belittle or tear down the work of other more generous colleagues.

In conclusion let us repeat that individualism in medicine will always be with us because the nature of our professional work constantly accentuates individualistic spirit. On the other hand, the group spirit seems to assert itself with us, only in spasmodic form. In some colleagues it is strong, in others it seems altogether absent. We belong to those who hold that the group spirit in medical practice should be nurtured and developed. It is the happy combination of individual

and group effort that will give American medicine the opportunity to make its greatest strides in the future.

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MARY BAKER EDDY—A LETTER AND A BOOK REVIEW

Policy of This Journal on Religious and Public Health Matters.—It is the policy of this journal not to discuss religious matters in its pages. This policy, however, does not preclude the mention or presentation of information having to do with general principles related to public health responsibilities, or with basic principles in news or educational procedures when such principles become involved in the acts of either healing or non-healing religious groups.

That is why in this issue is here printed so unusual a caption reference as that which heads these comments. The object thereof is to call attention to an open letter which is printed in the Correspondence column of the Miscellany Department of this number, and to a review which appears in the Book Review column.

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Astounding Statements in the Letter.—The letter referred to gives the experiences of a member of the California Medical Association in trying to purchase a copy of the biography entitled "Mrs. Eddy—The Biography of a Virginal Mind" by Dakin, in the different book stores and department store book departments of Los Angeles. The perusal of the letter will give a shock when it is learned that a book brought off the press by a reputable publishing house and having the sanction of the United States Government to go through the mails seemingly should be practically barred from the sales counters of such stores. Certainly if such book and department stores do so un-American a thing out of slavish or other fear of one group of citizens who may be averse to having the biographical volume read by other Americans, then it is proper that such stores should appreciate that such actions on their parts will be given publicity. Such publicity among the two camps of for and against citizens will permit such stores to receive what they presumably seek, namely, to benefit from the business accruing to them from the larger purchases made by whichever group of citizens is seemingly favored through such partisan espousal of interests.

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Principles Involved Are Important.—Because a knowledge of biographical data is more or less essential to an understanding of the physical, psychological and supposedly spiritual doctrines propounded by the founder of a spiritual healing sect, which in its work or mission contacts somewhat intimately with public health work and procedures, members of the medical profession have a very natural interest in such a biography. Because of the free speech and free-press principles which are involved, references to the letter and book review are accordingly here made so that all readers who so desire may acquaint themselves more fully concerning the issues and facts involved.